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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BEIJING 001696

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [ETRD](#) [KOLY](#) [FR](#) [CH](#)  
SUBJECT: FRENCH EMBASSY HINTS THAT SARKOZY HAS STUMBLED  
INTO HELPFUL ROLE ON TIBET

REF: A. BEIJING 1570  
[1](#)B. BEIJING 1396

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires, a.i., Daniel Piccuta. Reasons 1.4 (B/D).

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: French Ambassador Herve Ladsous told the Charge April 29 that the recent turbulence in Sino-French relations stemmed not from the protests during the Paris leg of the Olympic Torch Run, but from French President Sarkozy's linkage of his participation in the Olympics Opening Ceremony to the Tibet issue. According to French Embassy officials, Sarkozy, despite conflicting statements on Olympics attendance, has been using the uncertainty of EU leaders' participation at the Olympics as an opportunity to urge the Chinese to engage in constructive dialogue with the Dalai Lama. China has urged that France "de-link" the Olympics and Tibet. End Summary.

Linking Tibet to the Olympics  
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[1](#)2. (C) Chinese public outrage over protests at the Paris leg of the Olympic Torch Run (ref A) is not the real reason for the recent downturn in Sino-French relations, French Ambassador Herve Ladsous told the Charge April 29. (The Chinese Government complimented the French Government on its handling of security at the Torch Run immediately after its conclusion, according to French DCM Nicolas Chapuis.) Ambassador Ladsous said French President Sarkozy's public linking of participation in the Olympic opening ceremony with China's opening a dialogue with the Dalai Lama was what led the Chinese Government to criticize the French Government. French DCM Chapuis said separately on April 29 that Chinese official responses to Sarkozy's remarks were "hysterical and apoplectic." The popular outcry over the protests during the Paris Torch Run, including subsequent anti-French demonstrations in China and calls for boycotts of French companies, was orchestrated by the Chinese Government as a response to Sarkozy's remarks, Chapuis said, not because of the torch run problems.

Sarkozy's Problems Date Earlier  
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[1](#)3. (C) Ladsous said problems actually began earlier when Sarkozy first accepted Chinese President Hu Jintao's invitation to attend the Olympics. Sarkozy not only promised to attend himself, but also to bring the other members of the European Union's Troika (leadership), since France will hold the EU rotating 6-month presidency starting in July. This acceptance incensed several European nations, such as the Czech Republic, who felt that Sarkozy overstepped his bounds. British Ambassador William Ehrman said April 29 that EU President Jose Manuel Barroso was particularly angered by Sarkozy's commitment. Sarkozy then later angered China with "conditions" or "elements for participation" in the Opening

Ceremony (ref B). French DCM Chapuis said China is still angry that Sarkozy backtracked on his previous commitment to attend. Moreover, Sarkozy recently announced that the question of whether the entire EU delegation will attend will be discussed at the July Council of Europe meeting. Ladsous recognized that f or much of the summer, Sarkozy's attendance may remain uncertain, which will affect France's relations with China.

#### Calculated Plan?

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14. (C) Putting the best possible face on Sarkozy's statements, Chapuis said that Sarkozy's apparent missteps with China appear to have contributed to efforts to prod the Chinese Government into direct negotiations with the Dalai Lama. Chapuis said that Sarkozy's (and the EU's) current lack of a firm commitment to participate has given France the opportunity to insist on meaningful results from recently announced talks between Chinese officials and the Dalai Lama's representatives. According to Chapuis, the first meeting (currently scheduled for May 3) will discuss an agenda for future talks, the first session of which must take place before the Olympics and produce "real negotiation" if Sarkozy is to attend the Games.

#### Chinese Counterattack

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15. (C) Chinese senior officials have aggressively pressed France to "de-link" the Olympics from Tibet, Ladsous said. Chief of the Communist Party International Relations Department Wang Jiarui was "brutal" with the French on the need to de-link Tibet and the Olympics. Noting that China

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feels "injured and betrayed," Wang reportedly told Ladsous that China "would have expected this from the Americans, but not from our French friends." Now, however, Chinese officials have begun to express pleasure that France has indeed begun "de-linking." For example, visiting former French Prime Minister Jean-Pierre Raffarin did not connect the Olympics to Tibet, nor did he allude to Sarkozy's doing so during his recent visit to China.

#### French-Tibetan Contacts

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16. (C) French officials have been in direct contact with Dalai Lama representative in Washington Lodi Gyari, and have been advising him on the talks, DCM Chapuis claimed. He claimed that Lodi Gyari is unhappy with how negotiations with China have unfolded supposedly because he feels expectations for action have now shifted from China to the Dalai Lama.

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